

God bless Chris Parr, and God bless her family.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CONTRACEPTIVES

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the importance of ensuring coverage for contraceptives and the impact this has on women's health.

For centuries, important aspects of women's health care have been treated as a political football by advocates on all sides of the issue. In politicians' efforts to score political points, women suffer because of a lack of access to coverage, a lack of reliable information about health care choices, and because many women are vilified for some of the health care choices they make.

It's time to take politics out of women's health, and it's time to ensure that women's health coverage includes full access to contraception. Birth control can have significant health care benefits for women and their families. It can significantly reduce health care costs. And it's one of the most commonly taken drugs in the United States.

We need to stop playing games with people's health and instead live up to our responsibilities to protect the right of women to make the health care choices that are right for them. I look forward to working every Wednesday to talk about women's health.

#### FIFTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL RARE DISEASE DAY

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, today, February 29, marks the fifth annual International Rare Disease Day, a day devoted to bringing attention to the needs of those with rare diseases.

There are nearly 7,000 rare diseases. Research opportunities remain difficult; and approved therapies are scarce, despite the fact that rare or orphan diseases afflict nearly one in 10 Americans. Bureaucratic hurdles and a lack of research incentives add to the challenges of those with rare or orphan diseases and the organizations that serve them.

As cochairman of the Rare Disease Caucus with my colleague, Congressman JOSEPH CROWLEY, I am committed to working in a bipartisan capacity with like-minded Members, policy advocates, and families across the Nation to increase awareness and education of rare diseases.

It is through greater awareness that we are able to bring hope to those who suffer from rare and orphan diseases.

#### GAS PRICES

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I represent San Diego, California, which has the dishonor of being home to the highest gas prices in the Nation. The most expensive gas in San Diego was going for \$4.75 a gallon, and that hurts my constituents.

My friends on the other side of the aisle believe the solution is simple—more production means lower prices. However, our Nation's oil production is the highest it has been in years. And yet so are gas prices. The conclusion? More drilling does not mean lower prices.

Independent analysis has pointed to Wall Street speculators as a culprit for the rise in gas prices. Mr. Speaker, we've heard this story before: Wall Streeters gaming markets to make big bucks at the expense of consumers.

Another culprit? There is nothing truly competing against gasoline. Prices will go down when there are alternative fuels and real transportation choices to compete with oil.

There are two things that Congress can do to relieve the pain at the pump: an innovative 21st-century approach to our energy problems, and we need to tame the speculative markets.

#### JOB CREATION

(Mr. BUCSHON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of commonsense policies that will help create jobs.

I had the pleasure of meeting with one of my constituents, Jon David of Evansville, Indiana. Jon owns a small business, David Enterprises, an asphalt contractor and concrete supplier. He would like to expand his business, but onerous regulations are preventing him from doing it.

When I sat down with Jon, he talked about how EPA rules—such as emissions controls, dust regulations, the permitting process for oil refining, and wetlands designations on his property—these regulations, he tells me, are keeping him from selling his product and services that would allow him to expand his business and hire more employees. Instead, he spends his time dealing with regulations that increase his costs and prevent him from expanding.

The EPA under this administration should take note of how rules and regulations are hurting job creation. This is unacceptable. The House has passed bills to help out Jon and others like him, but the Senate has ignored them. There are 27 bills, at least, that we've passed here that we've sent to the Senate that would help Jon so he could quit spending his days fighting regulations so his business can survive.

#### HONORING REACH OUT AND READ RHODE ISLAND

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Reach Out and Read Rhode Island, a program that works with doctors to encourage young patients and their families to read.

In honor of the upcoming Read Across America Day, I wish to recognize the contributions this program makes in my home State, where it reaches 35,000 infant-to-preschool-aged children each year in 44 locations. Reach Out and Read Rhode Island provides free books through pediatricians' offices for children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years old, creating a small library for children and emphasizing the importance of reading.

Reach Out and Read Rhode Island helps to distribute 60,000 books each year to young children and their families, working to build a foundation for when a child enters school. Reach Out and Read Rhode Island should take great pride in the contributions it makes to our young children. I congratulate Reach Out and Read Rhode Island on its success.

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#### EXPAND DOMESTIC ENERGY PRODUCTION TO REDUCE GAS PRICES

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, last week, I heard from my constituents about the impact rising gas prices are having on their families and on their small businesses.

Congress must act to protect our constituents from even higher gas prices by expanding our Nation's domestic energy production. The solution is pretty simple—let's expand American energy production. This will reduce the cost of gas, putting money back in the wallets of every American, and it will create the kind of good-paying jobs that so many people need and would help get our economy moving again.

The House has already passed four bills to expand domestic energy production. It's time for the Senate to pass those bills and send them to President Obama so that he can show us whether his commitment to an all-of-the-above energy policy is mere rhetoric.

Creating jobs, saving our constituents money, and helping our economy should be bipartisan goals, and we can achieve them by expanding American energy production.

#### ASSAD'S ATROCITIES

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, first, I join with my female colleagues in supporting full health coverage for every single woman in our Nation.

I also rise to condemn the actions of Syria's Assad government, which are